(c) whether this has affected the students who have passed or studying in such institution;

(d) whether there was request for granting NCVT recognition; and

(e) if so, the response of the Government to this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir. Recognition/affiliation to NCVT is required for enabling the trainees to appear for the All India Trade Test conducted by NCVT;

(b) As per information given by State Government, number of unaffiliated ITIs/ITCs as on 31.7.96 was as follows:

Government	47
Private	7
Total	54

The State Government have also reported that in addition, there are 53 ITCs which have partial affiliation in respect of some trades.

(c) The trainess studying In institutes not affiliated to NCVT can appear for examination to be conducted by State Council for Vocational Training and are issued the certificates by the same body which is recognised for employment within the State.

(d) and (e) There was a request to grant affiliation to 42 ITIs, 41 started by the SC Development Department and one by ST Department of Kerala Government. But affiliation of these institutes could not be done as no Standing Committee Inspection Reports recommending their affiliation to NCVT, have been received. They could not be affiliated so far as they could not provide adequate facilities in accordance with the norms laid down by NCVT.

Agriculture and Rural Development Banks

4938.SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any representation during the current year for allowing Argiculture and Rural Development Banks to function rural areas of West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The Agriculture and Rural Development Banks (ARDBs) are co-operative societies governed by the respective State Co-operative Societies Act. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has reported that it had received proposals from the West Bengal State Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank (WBSCARDB) in 1996 for opening of branches by Howrah and Bankura ARDB and also for opening of a branch by the WBSCARDB at Asansol. NABARD had sought some clarifications on these proposals. Finally, however, only one proposal for establishment of branch of WBSCARDB at Asansol was received by NABARD in February, 1997.

NABARD has further reported that according to Informations available with them the branch at Asansol has since been established.

[Translation]

Availability of Drinking Water

4939.SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN :Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether in some parts of U.P. the availability of drinking water has been adversely affected due to lack of ground water during the recent years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to provide financial and technical assistance to the State in this regard; and

(c) the achievements made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR.U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) to (c) The Central Ground Water Board, based on a survey and assessment carried out In the State of Uttar Pradesh has stated that the total ground water resources of the State are assessed at 8.38 million hectare metre (m. ha.m) per year and the level of ground water development in the State is only 37.67% of its potential. This is a sizeable balance of ground water resource available for further deveopment and use. The Central Ground Water Board has further stated that there is no scheme to provide financial assistance to the State Government for Development of ground water resources for varios purposes. However, the Central Ground Water Board provides technical assistance to the State Governments in their effort to develop the ground water resources for various purposes.

Indian Investment Centre

4940.SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to close down the Indian Investment Centre;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government have considered the interests of the employees working in the said Institution; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) to (d) The Government has taken up a review of the role and relevance of the Indian Investment Centre in the present context of a liberalised business and economic environment for foreign and non-resident Indian investments.